7: Shklovsky -- 21-22 T-3 (1891-92) 1916 · Yakut
116, 753, 776

"As already mentioned, they [RCH: i e., the Kolymyans] speak Russian very imperfectly, their language being Yakutian and the Yakutian Pantheon has left a marked impression upon their religion. They firmly believe that there are four gods, one for each of the four corners of the sky; two saviours -- one in the East and one in the West -- St. Nicholas in the South, and the Mother of God in the North. Sometimes they confuse the latter with the only beneficent deity in the Yakutian [22] Pantheon, 'The Compassionate Mother of Creation.' Like the Yakuts, the Sredne Kolymyans believe that illness is caused by a devil entering the body, and the cure consists in a correct diagnosis -- that is, in finding out what devil is in the sick man; and that can only be done by a Shaman."

7: Shklovsky -- 22- 23 T-3 (1891-92) 1916 Yakut
116.776. 782. 826

"The influence of the Yakutian mythology can perhaps be seen at its strongest in the ideas concerning the brown bear, which animal is found in large numbers in the Kolymsk country, and is believed by the Yakuts to be an incarnation of their most terrible god, 'Ulu-Tayon.'

For example, a long caravan of pack-horses will suddenly stop on its way.

'What is the matter?' ask anxious voices.

'Ulu-Tayon,' answers the terrified guide.

And, indeed, the dreaded beast comes out of the forest and sits on its haunches, showing its teeth at them. He fears to attack so many people, but, on the other hand he does not seem inclined to go away.

All the men huddle together, and the best speaker among them advances a little, removing his cap and saying:

'Ulu-Tayon, we know that you alone are the owner of these parts and we have not come into your territory to insult you, but because our way lies through it. Forgive us, O Ulu-Tayon, for you know very well that none of our sons are bear hunters. Why then should you harm us?'

Meanwhile some of the Yakuts prostrate themselves and cry: 'Have mercy on us, Ulu-Tayon! Others with trembling hands prepare huge wood fires.[23] It frequently happens that the bear keeps them there for twenty-four hours, and all the time the Kolymyans supplicate the bear. They consider it a sin to pronounce his name, and they speak of him as 'Grandfather' or 'he'."

7: Shklovsky -- 33 T-3 (1891-92)1916 Yakut
116, 194, 492, 634

" It was the time of the summer general assembly (1) in Sredne Kolymsk, and Yakuts

1. There are two general assemblies, one in summer and one in winter.

came from the remotest parts of the district, from Verkhne Kolymsk, Alazei, etc. The 'street,' if it can so be described, was crowded and noisy. Numbers of Yakuts were constantly arriving on horseback at the house of the clerk where the assembly was held. Petty chiefs of small clans scornfully regarded the 'unofficial' people, constantly arranging their bead belts, from which hung old cutlasses, the gift of Catherine II to their ancestors. Near the house there were many horses tied up to poles. The extraordinarily high saddles, with large cushions adorned with copper and silver ornaments, would doubtless greatly astonish the ordinary cavalry man accustomed to Cossack and English saddles. From our windows could be heard the incessant hum of the guttural Yakutian language, which Gilder considered as sonorous and soft as a mixture of Italian and Irish. "

7: Shklovsky --33-34 T-3 (1891-92) 1916 Yakut
116, 152, 576, 609

"On these days [RCH:in Sredne Kolymsk] we were [34] subjected to constant annoyance. The Yakuts are very inquisitive and each newcomer considered it his duty to come and gaze upon 'the people from afar,' and for long afterwards in his distant home he will relate to his clan all about our books, our 'stone' eyes, out 'dog-like,' bearded faces, and other marvellous things, eliciting from his hearers cries of great astonishment and incredulity. Added to the inconvenience of this doubtful popularity, the task of receiving in one day ten or twelve of these Yakut visitors was not a slight matter. For each one we had to climb on the roof and open the chimney, which was closed to keep out mosquitoes; next to light the fire and boil the kettle, for the Yakut will not go until he has had some tea. Fortunately, it is not necessary to entertain the guest beyond giving him tea, frozen clotted cream and milk; he will finish it all, rise, cross himself and bow, saying 'Thank you,' and the visit ends."

7: Shklovsky -- 34-35 T-3 (1891-92) 1916 Yakut
116, 431, 574, 609

"As my hut [RCH: in Sredne Kolymsk] was directly opposite the Assembly House I could not complain of neglect on the part of visitors. The Yakuts soon found out that we never sent them away, and the door had hardly closed after one visitor before another came in. Some of them had an artless way of obtaining things. One would come and stand in the doorway, bowing.

'What do you want, friend?' I asked.

The 'friend' takes out from his breast a gnawed piece of yukala or half-cured fish and offers it to me, and it would appear that he has travelled 500 versts in order to make this present. After this the 'friend' not only feels quite at home, but even considers that he has placed me under an obligation. He removes [35] his eared cap, loosens his belt, sits down and, when tea is given him, he mentions that he is very fond of bread and vodka. He silently pushes his empty tobacco pouch forward, as a hint that it requires filling; then, taking my knife, suggests an exchange, the transaction being very profitable for the 'friend'. Next, taking my comb, he uses it on his stiff, harsh, doubtful-looking hair, then, after asking for several other trifling things, he unwillingly takes his departure, casting a lingering glance around to see whether there is anything more for which he can ask. We feared these Yakuts with their presents as we feared fire. But with such guests what could be done? We lacked courage to show them the door."

7: Shklovsky -- 37 T-3 (1891-92) 1916 Yakut
116, 825

"Here and there, like the cry of a peevish child, rose the cry of some small bird, and from the few hillocks came sounds like the bleating of a goat. These proceeded from a kind of water-hen, which, the Yakuts say, utters its call in twelve different languages before rain falls."

7: Shklovsky -- 39 T-3 (1891-92) 1916 Yakut
116, 804

"The kyoss is the Yakutian measure of length, but it is a very elastic one, for it is the distance to be traversed while ice melts in a kettle, and while water boils, and while meat is being cooked. As the kettles vary in size, the kyoss also varies in length. I do not know why, but the Russians there decided that a kyoss was about ten versts. According to Yakutian reckoning, and taking into consideration the varying sizes of kettles, there is a 'large ten versts' and a 'small ten versts.'"

7: Shklovsky -- 40 T-3 (1891-92) 1916 Yakut
116, 251

"Near the fishing-place were two Yakut women, covered with fish-blood, busily engaged in cutting off the heads and tails, boning the fish, and curing it in the sun, afterwards smoking it over a wood fire. Treated in this way chiri is called yükala; peldiadki, hatchirka; and pike, kitchimass. All the entrails were placed in a kettle and a boy of about ten years old was busily scooping some of this out and frying it over the fire, preparing salamat. To the Yakut children, the fishing season is like our jam-making season, and the fish-entrails are equivalent to the scum on the jam!"

7: Shklovsky -- 41-42 T-3 (1891-92) 1916 Yakut
116, 252, 264

"Many, many people will come to the wedding,' exclaimed my hostess, beginning to prepare our luncheon. She took from under a deer-skin a wooden cup full of fish-fat, removed with her fingers the dead mosquitoes and dirt in it, took a bundle of yukala, and placed all on the flat wooden barrel which served as a table. The yukala was dipped in the fish-fat, and this was the usual dainty luncheon in the fishing season. Remembering that Russians were somewhat [42] fastidious, our hostess produced for our use a flat spoon made of choobuk horn, (1) which she carefully cleaned by licking it."

1. The choobuk is a very interesting animal, little known to zoology. It is found in the mountains of Tass-Khayata. It resembles a moufflon and is very timid. Its thick fluffy fur is of a bluish colour. The Lamouts make spoons of its flat twisted horns.

7: Shklovsky -- 42 T-3 (1891-92) 1916 Yakut
116, 231, 246

"Our road lay entirely through meadows of luxuriant grass, which gives excellent hay, but unfortunately reaping cannot begin until the 20th of July, when the meadows are somewhat dry. The cut grass is placed not on the ground, but on poles, to dry, so that the meadows are coverd with what look like giant mushrooms, whose stems are the poles and whose heads are the bundles of grass. These hay-cocks are put together in September, when the marshes are slightly frozen. The animals are very fond of this hay, and soon fatten on it."

7: Shklovsky -- 42- 43 T-3 (1891-92) 1916 Yakut
116, 539, 824

"The Yakuts ascribe to this grass [RCH: grass used as hay] a sacred origin. This is the legend:

Jessagai Tayon, the 'White God's' brother, calls together all the migratory birds and shows them the way to the south. His seven daughters very often change themselves into white cranes (the Yakuts' sacred bird) and come down to earth to dance on the meadows. Once the kind goddess, Yechsite-Hatim, seeing them dance, took the most beautiful of the girls and said to her: [43]

'Your destination shall be the 'middle place', (1) to serve and help the Yakuts.'

1. The Yakuts divide the universe into three parts --higher, middle (the earth) and lower. The gods live in all three parts.

The girl cried and begged to be set free.

'Do not despise the pagan earth! Turn yourself into grass and nourish the animals of the Yakuts.' And so saying the goddess cut the wings of the girl, who became a blade of grass."

7: Shklovsky -- 44 T-3 (1891-92) 1916 Yakut
116, 174, 192

"The Yakuts settled on the banks of the Lena, having left the shores of Baikal, whence they had been driven by the Bouriat tribe. After the Yakuts' revolt under Djennik (seventeenth century), their leader, a remnant escaped and reached Kolyma, where they settled. They brought with them to this desert country traces of a higher civilisation. In their language there is a word for 'iron', although on the shores of the Kolyma the fugitives used tools made from mammoth tusks and stone. There are also words for 'agriculture,' 'to read', 'to write,' 'letter', and even the term 'learned' finds its equivalent in the Yakutian tongue. In the Far North-East all the ideas represented by these words are quite rudimentary."

7: Shklovsky -- 44-46 T-3 (1891-92) 1916 Yakut-1-2
116, 114, 177

"During six centuries the Yakuts were successively conquered by other races, and their extraordinary vitality alone saved them from extinction. Moreover, the Yakuts are the only settlers in the North who increase in numbers. But their condition of chronic subjection did not reflect advantageously upon their moral qualities, which are very bad. Reclus, who so well describes the polar races, gives the Yakuts the very worst of characters, but this eminent geographer was only partly right. The description applies only to the Yakuts of the Olekminsk region, who are in constant association with the Russians. Reclus' opinion was also held by [45] Vrousevitch, who wrote a most interesting article, 'The Civilisation and Life of the Inhabitants of the Yakutsk Region.' Judge for yourself of the psychological condition of a people treated as shown by the following sayings:

'You can make a friend of a Yakut only by flogging him.'

'Yakuts respect most those who treat them worst'.

These specimens of brutal philosophy are related by the American citizen, Gilder, as being the utterance of Ispravnik Varrava. Gilder further relates that once this man, being anxious to travel more quickly to a station 250 versts distant wished to take some deer which did not belong to him. The Yakuts naturally were unwilling to give them, since their owners would lose eight days' work just for the sake of obliging the ispravnik.

'A loud and lively conversation ensued,' writes Gilder, 'of which to my regret I could

not understand a word, but when I saw the ispravnik suddenly strike a Yakut with his fist and our Cossack at the same time lasso another who was trying to run away, I thought it my duty to ask the ispravnik whether I should begin to beat someone and, if so, on whom should I begin? He answered me that everything was all right and that the people were now obedient and "well disposed."' Unfortunately this was the only method employed to make the people 'well disposed'. Official visits are long remembered by the Yakuts! Here is a little sketch from the diary of a Bishop of Yakutsk: 'The Yakut drivers waited for their master [46] for fourteen days, and where? In the forest, under the open sky, in November with 46° R. of frost! They dug a hole in the snow, in which they placed logs, and made a fire to warm themselves.'"

7: Shklovsky -- 46 T-3 (1891-92) 1916 Yakut
116, 177, 574, 577

"Cunning, lying, and theft, these undesirable traits of character in the Yakut are in exact proportion to the amount of contact they have with their conquerors. The Yakuts from distant camps and those who live in camps near the towns, and are in contact with the transported settlers there, form two quite distinct races, so greatly do their characteristics differ. Hospitality is one of the good qualities of the Yakuts. Each passer-by enters at any time any hut he likes, thanks to the custom of keeping the doors unfastened. In the huts the 'best place', the seat along the eastern side of the wall, is kept free for visitors and the host offers to them the best he has in the hut. The poor Yakut frequently has only field mice for food, but for the guest he reserves a piece of horseflesh or hare. Sometimes the Yakuts who live on the highway are absolutely ruined by the generous hospitality they show to passers-by.

The Yakutian character should be studied in some far distant camp which has never been visited by transported settlers, traders, or the official having the methods and principles described by Gilder."

7: Shklovsky -- 46-47 T-3 (1891-92) 1916 Yakut
116, 178, 622

"At one time the position of head man of the clan was hereditary. His power was un limited and he might torture his kinsmen and put them to death, or sell them as slaves and take all their possessions. Now the headman is elected to his position, and he has about the same jurisdiciton as a Russian village [47] starosta, the only reminder of bygone supreme power being a cutlass."

7: Shklovsky -- 47 T-3 (1891-92) 1916 Yakut
116, 153, 186, 871

"The Yakuts are, no doubt, a very capable race. Their memory is excellent. In all the Yakutsk schools 45 per cent. of the scholars are Yakuts (368 to 428). These scholars are very proud of their race, and modestly call themselves the Greeks of the North, but Reclus gives tham a less flattering description. "

7: Shklovsky -- 47 T-3 (1891-92) 1916 Yakut
116, 618, 651, 565, 558, 735

"Very interesting is the clan's system of the distribution of taxation among its members. At the general assembly the clan is divided into three groups. The first group is composed of the poorest Yakuts, illegitimate children, and transported settlers, who are billeted upon the clan. This group does not bear any responsibility, and is called Itimnit (the paupers' group).

The members of the second group do not pay anything, but are obliged to maintain a certain number of paupers. The last group has also to maintain a certain number of paupers, and, in addition, to pay money, sometimes at so high a rate that it amounts to fifty roubles per head per annum. By means of this arrangement the Yakuts (in the two northern districts of the Yakutsk region) have no paupers; but, in truth, the condition of the Itimnit is very pitiable, for, except the transported settlers, all are the slaves of the chief. The members of the clan had unlimited power over their kinsmen, and in fact the power still remains, for they can keep the men as unpaid labourers, and even sell the young girls to any who want them."

7: Shklovsky -- 48 T-3 (1891-92) 1916 Yakut
116 871, 565

"Unfortunately, it is not possible to say anything good of Yakutian education in the remote districts. The Oulooss must send every year a certain number of Yakuts to be educated, and as the 'aristocracy' of the place object to having their children educated at the same school as the very meanest and poorest, these Yakut children receive their educatuion, not from the priest, but from the deacon. Alas, what an education! The little Yakuts, after years of painful struggling with the mysteries of A and B, return to Oulooss, not only unable to read, but even to understand Russian."

7: Shklovsky -- 50 T-3 (1891-92) 1916 Yakut
116, 538, 585, 776

"Although the Yakuts had been 'Christianised' a hundred years previously, paganism remained in full strength and to the numerous gods of their pantheon they added Christian saints. Probably there was no marriage ceremony in former times, for though Yakutian legends are extraordinarily rich in detail, the marriages of heroes are only very briefly described.

'The hero enters the hut, sees the beauty seated there, seizes her without delay, bends her like a twig, smells (kisses) her, they cohabited.' This constituted the ancient marriage rite, and the present one is not much in itself, the chief ceremonies being centered round the escorting of the bride to her new home."

7: Shklovsky -- 50 [2] T-3 (1891-92) 1916 Yakut
116, 539, 582, 614

"The Yakut chooses his wife from another clan. 'The bride who dwells among her own people cannot be happy,' says the Yakutian proverb, and 'Happy is the daughter who marries far away from the parental home."

7: Shklovsky -- 50-51 T-3 (1891-92) 1916 Yakut
116. 585

"The matchmakers go with the bridegroom to the parents of the bride, but all particulars, as to the [51] dowry, etc., have previously been settled. When the cavalcade arrives at the hut, the matchmakers enter, leaving the bridegroom outside. The mother, elder sisters, and other relatives of the bride come out to meet them, bearing bowls of koumiss and birch-bark jars filled with cream.

'We know, of course that you may not be hungry, having doubtless brought with you plenty of provision for the way, but, knowing that you were coming, we could not permit anyone else to touch these bowls. We have brought you of our best. Our mares were tended by seven chaste youths, and were milked by seven pure maidens.' So speaks the mother."

7: Shklovsky -- 51 T-3 (1891-92) 1916 Yakut
116, 562, 585

"The matchmakers accept the proffered refreshment, and then, still standing, repeat the terms of the marriage contract, and when the conditions are agreed to, the bridegroom enters. Often he is only a boy of thirteen. He takes off his belt, in which are his knife, pipe, flint and steel, and offers it to the bride, who is sitting near the fireplace. If she does not like the bridegroom she refuses to take the belt, whereupon all the company depart. Among the Yakuts, and generally among all the polar savages, the condition of women is much better than among the Russian peasantry. But the bride consents, and the marriage ceremony is ended."

7: Shklovsky -- 51-52 T-3 (1891-92) 1916 Yakut
116, 585, 591

"Dinner is offered to the guests, after which the bride and bridegroom are put to bed in the same hut. Etiquette requires that the husband should return next day to his home, subsequently visiting his wife in secret.

The same procedure had taken place five years [52] ago at the wedding of Moksogol's son. He had now concluded the payments of the bride's purchase-money, and, having saddled his best horse, set out upon his journey."

7: Shklovsky -- 52-53 T-3 (1891-92) 1916 Yakut
116, 585

"They are coming! They are coming!" cried merry voices outside. And, indeed, the trampling of horses' hoofs could be heard and everybody ran out. A horseman, with a young woman seated astride on the horse before him, approached the picketing-post. Itinach (the bridegroom) had happened to pass by the lake near which was his bride's home. She came out of the hut as if by chance, to draw water in her birchbark pail. Itinach shouted, picked up the girl, seated her in front of him, and set off at a gallop. The father and brother of the bride were in the hut, expecting this shout. They quickly ran out, rushed excitedly about in alarm, then they sprang on their bare-backed horses and galloped in pursuit for about five minutes, until they reached the marshes, when the pursuers stopped, quietly turned their horses, and in half an hour's time all arrived at Moksogol's hut to share the feast. Two girls, about twelve years old, came out to meet the young couple, and holding the bridle assisted Kitchipyr (the bride) to get down. From the tying-place to the door of the new hut newly-cut grass was laid down. On this grass Kitchipyr walked, curtseying every few steps, as etiquette requires. The doors of the hut were wide open, but the entrance was barred by two thin dry rods held by two girls. Kitchipyr, entering, broke these two rods against her breast, then picking up the pieces, lit them on the hearth. This ceremony [53] was to show that the Spirit of Fire now had another priestess."

7: Shklovsky --53 T-3 (1891-92) 1916 Yakut
116, 372, 626

"With the Yakuts the hearth-fire is never extinguished, the glowing embers being easily kindled to flame by the addition of fresh wood. It is considered a great disgrace to a woman should she allow her fire to go out, and she would be teased to death, the shame also falling on her husband. I remember only one example of this occurring, and in consequence the husband and wife were obliged to go to the farthest clan, not being able to endure the taunts of their neighbours."

7: Shklovsky -- 53 - 54 T-3 (1891-92)1916 Yakut
116, 585, 776, 782, 844

"As soon as the fire blazed on the hearth, they seated Kitchipyr [RCH: the bride of a wedding attended by the author] on the seat by the wall and hung a curtain of suede before her. On the threshold of the hut a young colt was killed, and the blood which spouted from the jugular vein was placed in a cauldron. The Shaman, taking some in a small bowl, poured it out on the ground at the door in order that the terrible god, Oulooss-Hannak-Tayon, his wife Han-Hatine, also the Lord of all Evil Spirits, Arsine-Dolai, who 'has a mouth at the back of his head and eyes in his temples,' might not bring harm into the dwelling. Another small bowl of blood the Shaman poured into the fire, a similar libation to the 'Spirit of the Hut', the little old woman, Nyaha Haraksine, who 'lives under the pole which supports the roof of the hut'; and also to the 'Patroness and Mother Saviour and Compassionate Lady Aisit-Hatine'. This kind goddess is the patroness of the Yakuts in general and of the women in particular. It is she who arranges the marriages, decides the fate of the pair, and helps [54] women in child-birth. According to the endless fairy-tale, 'Khan Jargistai,' which contains all Yakutian cosmogony, this goddess came to the first woman in her travail, remained with her three days, then left her, declaring that henceforth, so long as the Yakuts should exist, every woman three days after child-birth should rise, wash herself, and feed the cattle."

7: Shklovsky -- 54 T-3 (1891-92) 1916 Yakut
116, 585, 782

"During this offering to the Penates, [RCH: at the wedding ceremony attended by the author] the hut was encircled by an enormous leather strap, to which were fastened all the cattle belonging to the young couple. The Shaman put on the sacrificial robe, came out of the hut and stood in the centre of the living ring. To all the evil gods the Shaman poured out a libation of koumiss; to the beneficent gods there was no libation, as they were well disposed without propitiation."

7: Shklovsky --54 [2] T-3 (1891-92)1916 Yakut
116. 171, 776

"It is significant of the individual character of Yakutian theology that no offerings are ever made to the 'God of Gods,' the Spirit of the Eight-sided Universe (An-ya-Daidyn). To this god is given the title of 'The Drowsy,' which fact heightens the resemblance that this savage conception bears to the passive Brahma."

7: Shklovsky -- 54 -55 T-3 (1891-92) 1916 Yakut
116, 585, 261

"' All were gathered together. They killed many cattle. They ate and drank for three days and nights. They made merry. They hiccoughed because of the heavy food. The hungry were filled. The lean were fattened. '

Tradition thus describes a marriage feast of former times. Much the same thing happened on this occasion. In twenty-four hours so enormous a [55] quantity of food was consumed -- mare's flesh, raw mare's fat, cream, frozen clotted cream, etc., that the weight of each Yakut must have increased by several pounds. One course followed another in rapid succession, while good wishes to the young people were continually uttered.

'May your teeth ever be stuck in bone-marrow! '

'May your throat be washed with the best koumiss! '

'May your mouth be rinsed with melted butter! '

'May your table never lack sweet fat from the neck of the mare! '

These delicacies were to be the portion of the hosts if the wishes of the guests should have effect. "

7: Shklovsky -- 55-56 T-3 (1891-92) 1916 Yakut-1-2
116, 522, 533, 584

"Everything comes to an end, even a Yakut's appetite; and there came a moment when even the 'lean ones' refused more food and the old people fell down, overcome with sleep and repletion. [RCH: at the end of a wedding] The young people had long been awaiting this moment, and now they went out into the meadow and formed themselves into two separate ranks, men in one, and girls in the other. With decorous and mincing steps these two living walls slowly approached each other.

'Ho, boys, ho! Let us enjoy ourselves while we are young! ' chanted one of the men.

'Sing aloud, my throat!' sang a girl.

'Boys, let us dance and laugh while we are still unwed; ere yet the sinews of our strength are drawn out by a woman's little tongue! '

'Girls, let us play while we are still unwed, while we are yet uncaught by the coarse hands of men!'

This was all improvised. Jests, at times coarse, [56] were freely bandied about. On hearing the merry voices some old women, mostly blind, came out of the hut. Their extreme thinness, their unkempt grey hair, their blind eyes and strange dress, gave them a most fantastic appearance, reminding one of the terrible Druid priestesses mentioned in Michelet's 'Histoire de France.' The old women listened attentively to the young people's hokes, and they also improvised songs in which they made mention of lost youth, the sweetness of man's embrace, and the sorrow of infirmity. I quote one of these improvisations which I noted down at the time, as a specimen of the wild poetry breathed by

these untutored songs:

'How welcome is the warmth of the sun to my aged bones! How joyful to dance with you, my children! This may be the last time I shall sing. Soon will the earth cover my sightless eyes. Next year again you will come here to play, but on my grave the young grass will be green. Cold shall I be there, nor can the hearth fire warm my old body. Dance and sing then, O youth!'

She sang with wild energy: 'And I too will dance with you for the last time. For the last time I shall drink the koumiss, and next spring you will gather here again in the sunlight. Then you will remember the old woman, and she will rejoice in her cold grave. She will hear your songs and from the grave her darkened eyes will see you drink the koumiss. And her happy bones will dance to your merry songs.'

7: Shklovsky -- 56-57 T-3 (1891-92) 1916 Yakut
116, 524, 533, 831

"[RCH: after a wedding attended by the author] Besides improvisations, they sang the customary songs, some of which expressed unbridled licentiousness and sensuality, the utmost plainness of language [57] being employed. Others, on the contrary, were delicate and sad."

"Friends, let us play at guessing riddles ' suggested an old woman.
'Riddle-me-riddle-me-ree. From the roof hang four moccasins.'
The answer was: 'The four teats of a cow.'
Riddle-me-riddle-me-ree. Every morning the daughter of the Tsar Syrad Omuk comes out to work spells.'
The answer to this was 'Dawn.'
Some of the riddles were quite Yakutian in character.
'Riddle-me-riddle-me-ree. He was born in a hut where he lay quiet and still, but when he arose there came a blizzard.'
'We know, we know! ' cried many voices. 'It is Sata.' (1)

1. The stone of Yakutian mythology. It is believed to be inside an eagle, or in the kidney of a black bull with a white patch on his forehead. This stone, when laid on the palm of the hand, causes a storm; and when cast into the water it turns round and round and them becomes still.

To please me, they began to ask riddles in praise of Russians.
'They say that My Lord receives chips that have been cut in his country.'
Guess, if you can, that the answer is 'A letter! '

7: Shklovsky --57 T-3 (1891-92) 1916 Yakut-2
116, 524

Sometimes, with Homeric simplicity, they asked the girls riddles, courage to answer which might only have been found in those bold story-tellers who compiled 'Les cent Nouvelles nouvelles' in the time of Louis XI, supposing, of course, that they had understood Yakutsk! "

7: Shklovsky -- 58 T-3 (1891-92) 1916 Yakut
116. 831, 837

"The Yakuts cannot boast of a high morality.

'Any mare may bear a dead colt, any egg may go bad, any girl may bear a child!' So they formulate their opinion of the virtue of their girls. Conjugal infidelity is very common, but the husband is not distressed or annoyed, except when his hut is taken from him by the lover. 'A stranger takes my fire and uses it!' he then complains. Unhappily, also, incest is frequent among the Yakuts."

7: Shklovsky -- 58[2] T-3 (1891-92) 1916 Yakut
116, 556, 585

"The wedding feast lasted for three days. Such feasts cost a Yakut half his fortune, but he would be considered disgracefully mean were he not to provide it."

7: Shklovsky --66 T-3 (1891-92) 1916' Yakut
116, 776, 822

"All that evening we three 'icy-eyed Russians (for so the Yakuts called those of us who wore spectacles) amused ourselves by shouting and calling, thereby giving much hard work to the merry little spirit of the forest, Barilakh, (1) whose shoulders are cov-

1. The Yakuts say that the echo is the little sprite Barilakh mocking the people

ered with fur, and who is so small that she can hide behind the pile of fallen larch needles."

7: Shklovsky -- 68-69 T-3 (1891-92) 1916 Yakut
116, 825, 177

"About 230 versts from Sredne Kolymsk there is the enormous Pomasskin. On the top of the mountain, among the wild-rose bushes, there were about twenty graves nearly level with the ground, one of them distinguished by a big, bent pole, half decayed by time. These were the famous 'graves of twenty Russians' of which I had heard when I started from Yakutsk. [69]

'Who were they?' I asked the old Yakut Moksogol (his Russian name was Nicholai), who lived at the bottom of the cliff.

'The snow has fallen many times since that happened,' he began. 'Some Russian soldiers came and wanted to build a town on the mountain. They began to fish, and they caught a sturgeon. But, my friend, it was a strange sturgeon, for it had only one eye, and that was on its forehead. 'Oh, comrades,' said one old man, 'do not eat it, or some evil will happen.' But they laughed. They cooked and ate the sturgeon and lay down to rest, but only the old man rose up again, for he had not eaten of the fish; all the others were dead. They are buried here, and this pole marks the grave of their chief.'

What are these graves? Whence came the people who lie buried in this most desolate spot? How can the Yakuts know such a word as 'soldier' when throughout the entire region there are no military? To all these questions I can only reply that I do not know."

7: Shklovsky -- 72-73 T-3 (1891-92) 1916 Yakut
116, 563 697, 177.69 Russia
636.69

"The haillak [RCH: i.e., the transported Russian criminal] knows perfectly well that all is ended for him when he is once in Kolymsk; escape is impossible, for no human being can penetrate the polar forest, and to his exasperation is added a gloomy despair. He is sent to a Yakutian camp (Oulooss) and the Yakuts have to maintain him. They build a hut for him, give him a horse, supply him with meat, fish, frozen cream, tea--in a word, everything. In their reckoning each haillak costs the Oulooss ten or twelve roubles per month, and this, when the Yakuts themselves are obliged to live on bark, flavoured with a little sour milk, and when in the Verkhoyansk region they are obliged to eat field-mice so that they may not die of starvation. In order to protect their wives and daughters from the haillak, the Yakuts give him an orphan girl with whom to cohabit. Pitiable indeed is the plight of this wretched girl! Her terrible tyrant rules her with fist and cudgel, and her face is never free from bruises. The haillak so despises the Yakuts that, though he may live for years among them, the only word of their language which he will condescend to learn is 'give!' Life under these conditions is equally intolerable on both sides. The Yakuts regard the haillak as vermin, as a savage, wicked beast that drains their life; as an evil satyr who will violate wives and daughters in the presence of their husbands [73] and fathers. On the other hand, the criminal forced to live among savages, who do not understand him, feels his position to be worse than solitary confinement. Finally, driven to desperation, he does something terrible in order to compel the

authorities to remove him from this accursed region. While I was in the Kolymsk district one of these criminals, without any reason, threw the child of a small chieftain into a fire and held him there with an iron rod until he was burnt to death. Despair gave courage to the Yakuts. They sprang upon him, bound him, and took him to Sredne-Kolymsk, and from there to Yakutsk, where he was sentenced to twelve years' hard labour."

7: Shklovsky --73 T-3 (1891-92) 1916 Yakut
116, 563, 697, 177.69 Russia
636.69

"Near Nijne Kolymsk there is a clan of eighteen Yakuts who have to maintain fourteen of these transported criminals. It is difficult to believe, but it is a fact that the entire clan are the slaves of the haillaks. The Yakuts give to each haillak everything necessary --draw-nets, nets, dogs, sledges, cetc.; the savages themselves, having no nets of their own, work for him, receiving for themselves only one-third of the total catch. Very often the haillak will trade all the things for drink, and then demand new ones."

7: Shklovsky --74-75 T-3 (1891-92) 1916 Yakut-1-2
116. 174, 563, 697, 177.69 Russia
636.69

"But what is the explanation of their abject fear of the haillak [RCH: i. e., the transported Russian criminal] and their subservience to him? One reason is of remote origin. The ancestors of the Kolymyan Yakuts were fugitive insurgents, who escaped after their defeat under Djennik, their leader. These people fled to Kolyma in deadly fear [75] after the horror of the suppression of the revolt. The ferocious tortures and executions of that time are still kept in remembrance by song and story from one generation to another. The Yakuts tremble at the mere mention of 'Russian,' and a haillak is to them the personification of all the cruel enemies mentioned in those terrible stories. The Yakut always calls him 'Tayon' (lord or master), and the haillak treats the Yakuts as his ancestors treated theirs, the poor savages enduring it all; indeed, they believe that the haillak is sent to them in order to make their lives bitter. That is one reason. Another is the absolutely unprotected condition of the Yakuts. The region is so vast that the solitary Russian official is unable to help them even if he wished to do so. It is terrible to speculate on the ultimate fate of these poor savages, when, as is probable, criminals will be sent in greater numbers to the remotest parts of Siberia. Then will the Farthest North-East be a veritable hell, where the groaning and torment of the wretched savages will never cease except with their lives.

Kind-hearted people tried to find out how to help a score or so of lepers-- a very laudable scheme--but perhaps kind-hearted people will also be found willing to find out

how to cure, not a few score, but the whole race of Yakuts of a not less terrible leprosy, which is eating away their morals and destroying their economic position; and the name of this leprosy is haillak."

7: Shklovsky -- 83-84 T-3 (1891-92) 1916 Yakut
116. 697, 177.69 Russia
636.69

"Almost all the prisoners in the Yakutsk prison whether sentenced or under trial, expectiong a small number of Yakuts, belonged to the exiled element. [84]

The total number of the exiles in this region is 6,090 (5,155 men and 935 women). Classified into districts the numbers are as follows: --

	Men.	Women.
Yakutsk ..	3,805 ..	.. 693
Olekminsk ..	740 ..	.. 122
Viluisk ..	471 ..	.. 114
Verkhoyansk ..	76 ..	.. 2
Kolymsk ..	63 ..	.. 4
	5,155	935

Deducting from this total 154 political prisoners (132 men, 22 women) and 1,233 religious fanatics (754 men, 479 women) there remains a formidable army of haillaks, numbering 4,703, who are an intolerable burden on the shoulders of the unhappy Yakuts.

The above figures are taken from the Revision of the Yakutsk district, 1889."

7: Shklovsky -- 112-113 T-3 (1891-92) 1916 Yakut-1-2
116, 158

"I have already mentioned that the people, especially the women, are extremely nervous, the nerve diseases of the latter manifesting themselves in two forms: 'menerik' and 'emiriatchka.' The former is the same as demoniacal possession, but the latter takes various forms, in the mildest of which the afflicted woman will start and cry out at an unexpected sound; in a more severe case she will repeat any sentence which has especially struck her -- some times a long piece of verse in a language unknown to her, exactly reproducing intonation and accent, just as she has heard it. I remember one instance of this. We were returning from Nijne Kolymsk and we stayed for a night at a Yakut hut. After we had removed our wraps there entered an unusually tall Yakut, very old, and dried up like a mummy, his features set like bronze. He had just come from the lake, where he had been fishing, and with his crooked, claw-like fingers he began to pull out of the net the still leaping [113] fish entangled it it. The sight reminded me of Longfellow's poem , and I quoted aloud:--

With hooked fingers,
Iron-pointed hooked fingers,
Went to draw his nets at morning
Salmon trout he found a hundred.

Great was my astonishment when I heard these words repeated; and I turned and saw a Yakut woman, evidently an emiriatchka, for in her normal condition she would certainly be quite incapable of repeating two words of any foreign language. She leaped up in fright when she saw my friend, whose spectacles had evidently terrified her, and seized a log to attack him. Then she cried, 'Abass!' and began to imitate every movement she saw, though she would not have been able to act upon a suggestion of any kind. The young people, for their own amusement, will dance, stand on their heads, etc., in the presence of an emiriatchka woman, and she will reproduce all their actions until she falls down from exhaustion.

This peculiar nervous desease is worse and more pronounced in the case of older sufferers; and a violent emiriatchka will sometimes spring, knife in hand, upon an object or a person. I saw emiriatchkas only among Russian settlers and Yakuts, and I never saw a male afflicted with this desease. I wandered about for two weeks among the Chooktchi, but did not see one case. It may be that only people from a comparatively milder climate are subject to this illness, as, for instance, Russians and Yakuts, but not the aborigines of the polar region, such as the Chooktchi."

7: Shklovsky -- 180 T-3 (1891-92)1916 Yakut
116, 264

"The fastidious traveller would do well to turn his head aside to avoid seeing how the Yakuts clean the cauldron at the end of the meal. The hostess first takes out all the bones, which she gives to the children; after that she scoops out with a flat horn-spoon as much as possible of what is left, but round the sides and bottom were left traces of the food, traces which no spoon could remove. But this matter is very easily remedied. Fingers are called into requisition for this, fingers whose cleanliness leaves much to be desired. At last, even fingers cannot remove any more, but the Yakuts still suspect the existence of some nourishing elements on the sides of the cauldron, and tongues now come into action. This is the children's business. Some red-cheeked, slant-eyed Bouksan or Amoukchan or Itiniak, on whose flat, short-nosed dirty face garden produce might have been sown, puts his shaggy head into the cauldron and begins to lick it with scrupulous care. After this last operation you can wager that not the least trace of food remains in the cauldron. This unpleasant rutual always takes place even when you feed the Yakuts well, and have, moreover, given them a little store of food besides."

7: Shklovsky -- 181 T-3 (1891-92) 1916 Yakut
116, 776, 782, 823

"On the fourteenth day we passed over the Alazeisky Range--the frontier of the Kolymyan region. The ascent is gradual, and the mountains are not especially remarkable; they are more like rows of hills. Following the local custom we tied little pieces of rag on the pole at the crest of the mountain. White partridge feathers, different coloured ribbons, bunches of horsehair, all these were offerings to the Spirit of the Mountain. As the ascent of the range is easy, the Yakuts do not think it necessary to waste too many offerings, finding that the spirit is kind enough without them. It is different on the terrible Verkhoyansk Range, where merchants, as well as Yakuts, throw to the spirit money pieces of butter, fat, etc."

7: Shklovsky --186 T-3 (1891-92) 1916 Yakut
116, 788, 796

"On the fifteenth day of our journey we reached Indigirka. In a lonely hut, waiting for our deer to rest, we spent our Christmas. The Yakut women put on over their ordinary leather tunics a long robe of gaily-coloured cotton material, then brought armfuls of hay and strewed it on the floor. A stump of wax-candle was put in the place of honour in the corner and on a piece of smoke-begrimed paper was a roughly-made wooden cross. All the people, adults and children, stood in a row before the cross. An old man crossed himself and stood motionless, and all the rest followed his example. Again the old man crossed himself and said 'Christos' ! The others repeated the word, and this is the only prayer which the savages know. After standing still for a time the old man blew out the candle, the savages shook hands with each other, and the banquet began. The hostess cooked several hares and partridges."

7: Shklovsky -- 192-193 T-3 (1891-92) 1916 Yakut
116, 821

"The eclipse of the moon was beginning, but the spectacle did not alarm anyone, only the women and girls said pityingly: 'Poor thing!'

The Yakuts have an interesting legend to explain the eclipse:

The Oulooss gave a poor orphan girl to a rich man to work for him. He was very cruel and overworked her. One night he sent her with a pail to draw water from an ice-hole. The girl slipped, broke the pail, and spilt the water. She stood and wept. "No one to pity me," she cried. The sun pitied her and came [193] down, and the moon also. 'The girl is mine, I will take her,' said the sun, 'for I am the elder.'

"The girl is mine," said the moon, 'you work in the daytime and it is cheerful for you. I am lonely at night.' So the moon took her away to the 'high place.' The girl was terrified and grasped at a willow twig, which broke away, and she took it with her. She is still to be seen in the moon, holding the pail and twig, but sometimes she longs so for the earth that she faints, and then the moon darkens with grief until the girl revives."

7: Shklovsky --194 T-3 (1891-92) 1916 Yakut
116., 793

"After leaving Verkhoyansk we travelled on for five days, and in the hut where we were now resting we found strange companions. There were Yakuts of all ages, but most of them were children from ten years of age to tiny babies in arms. They were waiting for a priest. In this region it often happens that Yakuts are born, get married and die without even seeing a priest, and when by chance a priest comes he baptises the children, marries the parents, and says the funeral service for perhaps twenty dead."

7: Shklovsky -- 198-199 T-3 (1891-92) 1916 Yakut
116, 114, 273, 796

"I venture to quote from the bibliographical rarity 'Reisen' (page 172, vol. ii.), by Gmelin, of whose impartiality and honesty all polar explorers hold so high an opinion!

'All the holidays are devoted more to the devil than to God. Drunkenness and licentious behaviour give a very bad example to the numerous heathen, who see the greatest pleasure of the inhabitants that consists in drunkenness; and not the drunkenness confined to one occasion, one evening, for example, for the drunkenness that infects all the people at these times is such that no astrologer could find even one happy hour when they are sober, for to them all hours are the same. On Christmas Day a kind of infection seizes the people, like a fever, from which on the second or third day all become quite mad. The illness culminates on the fourteenth day in a general madness, which does not end for five or six weeks. During the week before Lent they are seized with a fresh paroxysm, from which they recover in eight days. In spring, at Easter time, this madness returns, with the difference that, owing to Lent, the attack is shorter but fiercer and ends on the seventh day. Like convalescents who are just recovering from a serious illness, the people only very gradually resume their normal life--that is to say, they are drunk for only four days in the week. Sometimes the madness returns with double strength, and then they are drunk for eight days at a time. I consider that drunkenness is a disease which, like epilepsy, ends only with death.' [199]

Such a statement of the habits of the Yakuts is given by Gmelin."

7: Shklovsky -- 202-203 T-3 (1891-92) 1916 Yakut-1-2
116, 796, 536

"There was unusual excitement in Yakutsk about an affair which had happened a few days previously. It was customary, at Christmas time, throughout the holiday, for all classes to go out in masquerade. Singing and playing on musical instruments, they went in groups from one house to another, and at each house where the inmates were willing to receive the masqueraders a lantern was hung out. All the big officials consider it their duty to receive them, but on this occasion some unpleasantness had occurred. The Vice-Governor gave a kind welcome to the masqueraders, and they began to perform a little 'play,' in which different official institutions were represented, the local police, the court, the Treasury, etc. One masquerader wore the uniform of a general, and the others addressed him in verse, petitioning for various reforms. Their requests were modest, and were wittily expressed, and the Vice- [203] Governor applauded the masqueraders and touched glasses with them. They next went to the house of another official, again they performed their little show, were well received, thanked and their health drunk. And so on to a third and a fourth house, by which time the masqueraders began to show signs of the frequent health drinkings. Their tongues were loosened, and they added new couplets to the verses. The masquerader representing the general began to talk, and then to make speeches in parody of the speeches of a local official. It was quite an excitement. Next day search was made for the 'general,' and rumour said he was to be exiled to Kolymsk. None of the masqueraders could be found anywhere; however, at last they presented themselves to apologise for their freak. They

7: Shklovsky --202-203 T-3 (1891-92) 1916 Yakut -2
116, 796, 536

were all young local officials and teachers. The punishment was not very serious; they were placed under arrest only for a few days."

7: Shklovsky --205 T-3 (1891-92)1916 Yakut
116, 174, 61

"The Russians discovered the River Lena in 1628. Ten bold fellows, under the leadership of Vassili Bougor, travelled on skis from the Yenisei to this greatest of the north rivers, on the banks of which 150,000 Yakuts lived. The savages were divided into nine Oulooss (tribes) and each tribe into several clans or families. It must be remembered that the Yakuts brought with them from Lake Baikal traces of a rather higher civilisation; nevertheless, these ten bold adventurers managed to subdue this great people. All the ten were traders. In 1636 Captain B. came to the Lena and established stockaded settlements."

7: Shklovsky -- 205-207 T-3 (1891-92)1916 Yakut-1-2
116, 173

"A very interesting legend is told by the Yakuts of the conquest of their region. The legend (with slight variation) is to be found among Russians as well as Yakuts.

The central figure in the legend is the warrior, Dygyn, a petty chief of the Yakuts. Here is the legend as it was told to me by an old Cossack:

'After Ermak had conquered Siberia, and was drowned in the River Irtish, his lieutenant, Ivan Koltzo, said: "Now that he is dead, why should I care for my life? I will go and fight." Then the Cossacks went in boats along the rivers, and when they reached the end of one river they carried the boats on their shoulders to another one, and they built stockaded settlements between the two rivers. [206] They conquered many of the natives, but themselves suffered much. Sometimes they were compelled by hunger to eat their own people. At last they came to the Yakutian land, A great number of natives came to meet them, and said: "Say, friends, what is the news?" "I want to trade with you," said Koltzo. 'Will you sell me as much land as a bullock's hide will enclose?' It was done. The Yakuts were stupid savages then, and they are stupid savages now. But Koltzo deceived them. He cut the bull's hide into thin strips and with them enclosed a large piece of land, built a tower on it, and said:

"Now I am going to fight you." And they fought. The Yakuts had their great warrior chief Dygyn. They say his shoulders were three yards round. The Cossacks stayed in the tower and shot with their guns, and the Yakuts sent their arrows to the Cossacks. Dygyn was thinking. The Cossacks had no food, and they came out of their tower to get

some. Now they had a very bad time. Dygyn was a very brave warrior. He killed a great many Cossacks, but nobody could kill him.' Then Ivan Koltzo played a trick. The Cossacks hung out a heavy block from the tower, and under it they placed all kinds of dolls and ribbons. Then Koltzo sent a message to the Yakuts: "Let us have peace. Come to us as friends." The foolish Yakuts believed him and went into the tower. Dygyn went also. While they were looking at the dolls and ribbons Koltzo ordered the Cossacks to cut the cords holding up the block. It fell down and crushed them all, and they all died. Koltzo tore out Dygyn's eye, put it in [207] spirit, and sent it to the Tsar. That was an eye indeed; thirty pounds it weighed! But the Tsar said: "Why did you not bring me this giant alive?"

'And from that time the whole of the region was ours. The Yakuts ran away to the forest, to the marshes, to the mountains, and the Government could hardly find them afterwards.' "

7: Shklovsky -- 207 T-3 (1891-92) 1916 Yakut
116, 175, 651

"As a matter of fact, the Yakuts did not run away directly after the death of Dygyn(1) [RCH: see category 116, pp. 205-207]

1. Dygyn was a petty chief, an historical personage.

In 1683 the first Governor was appointed, Peter Golovin, and another to help him, Gliyebof, and a priest Efim Filatof. They all arrived in Yakutsk on the 6th of June, 1640, accompanied by 'streltzy' (regulars), Cossacks, various small officials, and traders.

'The Government of this place began with heavy taxation, not certainly for the profit of the Government, but for the officials,' says Moskvin, a Yakutsk merchant, whose manuscript chronicle, 'The Officials of Yakutsk and Their Doings,' covers the period ending 1821."

7: Shklovsky -- 207-208 T-3 (1891-92) 1916 Yakut
116, 174, 669, 687

"The conquered people were oppressed, tyrannised over, and tortured under the pretext of punishment for not paying the taxes, but they were not told the amount they ought to pay. Reduced to despair by robbery , torture, and execution, the Yakuts rebelled, but they were no match for the Russians with their firearms, and the rebellion was soon put down. This was followed by a succession of terrible punishments and executions. By order of Golovin, the Yakuts had their noses and ears cut off, eyes put out, or were buried alive in the ground up to the eyes. In the [208] prison at Yakutsk the torturers and the executioners were hard at work from morning till night. But, fortunately for the country, the Governors did not agree about the division of the booty and Gliyebof, who considered himself injured, sent such a very stong message of complaint to Moscow that in 1645 Soushellef , a secretary, was sent to Yakutsk to inquire into the matter, and next year Golovin was dismissed. He was sent to Tobolsk, where he was racked and unmercifully knouted. Two large manuscripts, weighing about a hundred pounds, were filled with the account of his misdeeds. After him a succession of governors was sent, but none remained long; most of them were arrested soon after appointment, but things were not on this account any easier for the Yakuts. Their condition became intolerable when, in July, 1675, Governor Andrew Bamishov was sent to Yakutsk. 'On his appointment,' says the chronicle of Moskvin, 'he took very stong measures, whether because of circumstances or of his own wish is not known, but during his period of office there were terrible exections every day by various cruel methods. The sufferers were Russian Dissenters and Yakutian chiefs."

7: Shklovsky -- 208-209 T-3 (1891-92)1916 Yakut-1-2
116, 174, 669, 687

"It must be said that from the first year of its existence Yakutsk was the destination of exiled Dissenters and political offenders, the latter often arriving with their tongues cut. Governor Barnishov never sat down to table without having previously sent someone to capital punishment, which he gave for the most trifling offences. The victims were quartered, impaled, boiled alive in a cauldron, etc., [209] When the Governor happened to be in a good humour he, as a special favour, ordered hanging instead of the other methods; unfortunately, he was very seldom in a good humour. On the 3rd of July, 1678, this Governor was sent to Tobolsk for having received bribes. Then came Governor Priklonsky, in 1682, when the Yakuts made their last attempt at rebellion. They were joined by the Dissenters and some Cossacks who had married Yakutian wives, and the rebellion ended in the complete defeat of the insurgents. The leader, Djennik, the chief of the Kangalaks Oulooss, was taken wounded and sent to Yakutsk, where he died in the torture-chamber. He was flayed alive, his newly-born child wrapped in the skin, while the mother was put on the rack.

The remnant of the insurgents fled to the Vilui, the Yana, and the Kolyma, and on the banks of these rivers they settled. The fugitives brought to these far-away regions terrible accounts of their conquerors, and the dread of the Russians was so great that when, in the course of their campaign against the natives, the Russians came to the

7: Shklovsky -- 208-209 T-3 (1891-92) 1916 Yakut-2
116, 174, 669, 687

Kolyma district they met with no resistance except from the Lamouts at the gorge of Ell-air-Sibiet (1)

1. In the mountains of Tass-Khayata, between the rivers Yana and Indigirka.

7: Shklovsky -- 209-210 T-3 (1891-92) 1916 Yakut
116, 538

"To this day, in the farthest north-east of Siberia you will hear in some dark hut, lighted only by the fire, the story of the dreadful death of Djennik, [RCH: see category 116, pp. 208-209] told in monotonous recitative by an old blind woman.

The Yakutian epics are remarkable for their wonderful richness of imagination and wealth of description. [210] The old woman describes in minute detail the terrible operation of flaying, and what kind of knives were used; and on the seats by the wall are the listening Yakuts, with pale, terrified faces, too frightened to utter a word."

7: Shklovsky -- 217 T-3 (1891-92)1916 Yakut
116, 437, 484

"At one time Yakutsk sent out a body of explorers, who with little means accomplished more than other expeditions which were better equipped. Among them were Michael Stadukin, Dejnev, who discovered the strait between the two continents, Nikita Shallaourov, Lakhov, Bakhov, Laptev, Pavloutski, and Sergent Andreef, who first brought news of having seen land beyond Bear Island. At that time Yakutsk was the centre to which went all the energetic, enterprising, and adventurous, also those who wanted rich furs. Trade in furs still goes on there, but the traders take no interest in anything beyond the furs they get, for which they pay in vodka. If the modern Yakut knew anything of the former gererations of trader-explorers, he might with reason be proud of them, but they perished, like the race of giants, leaving no trace."

7: Shklovsky -- 217-218 T-3 (1891-92) 1916 Yakut
116, 135, 325

"On the banks of the Aldan, near Yakutsk, iron ore is present in great quantities, and enormous blocks [218] of it found on the surface of the earth are sold in the town for a trifling sum. The Yakuts smelt iron in the same way as did the ancient Greeks. They place the ore in the fireplace and pile coal round it, maintaining the heat of the fire by means of hand bellows. When the carbon is burnt away, they break up the masses of slag, and the metal they find they work with hammers. Of the iron are made the hunting-knives famous in that region. No attempt is made to mine the earth for the rich reserves of iron which are undoubtedly there."

7: Shklovsky -- 218 T-3 (1891-92) 1916 Yakut
116. 191. 871. 177. 87 —Russia
637. 87

"Lately the nember of students at Yakutsk has increased, but not long ago the majority of merchants and traders were entirely illiterate, and even the most aristocratic among them spoke only Yakutian. Now there is a seminary, also a secondary school, preparatory schools for girls, a Yakutian missionary school, and five municipal elementary schools. The total number of scholars in all the schools is 488, out of 6,499 inhabitants. The secondary school was founded in 1892 and the account is interesting. Thirteen years previously the town authorities asked permission from the Government to open a secondary school for modern subjects without classics, and permission was granted to open a preparatory school in classics. The Yakuts, who only imperfectly understood Russian, were compelled to learn the details of Latin grammar, by means of which they would of course bring civilisation and culture to their native Oulooss! And even now the scholastic system leaves much to be desired."

7: Shklovsky -- 220 T-3 (1891-92) 1916 Yakut
116, 871, 177.87 Russia
636.87

"It is easy to imagine the state of affairs which existed in the remote province of Yakutsk, and what kind of classic literature was there taught to the Yakuts. After thirteen years, permission was given to open a school for modern subjects without classics. Education has now made great strides in Yakutsk, I even know several Yakuts who went in carts by a slow and tedious journey to Tomsk, 4500 versts from Yakutsk, and there studied at the university, afterwards passing the examination with great distinction. The late Governor of Yakutsk, Svetlitsky (afterwards transferred to Irkutsk), was especially kind to the students, and after his departure sincere grief was long felt by everyone. Every Yakut knows of Governor Svetlitsky, who was the most humane and enlightened of men, and whose influence had an ennobling effect even upon the rough people whom travellers meet in Yakutsk."

7: Shklovsky -- 224 T-3 (1891-92) 1916 Yakut
116. 173, 697, 177.69 Russia
636.69

"There is a vague tradition that many years ago the Yakuts lived in the south by the sea near the Mongols, (1) but that in the time of the great warriors they went farther north

1. Probably by Mongols is meant Bouriats.

to the Lena. They were pursued by the Mongols, who tried to kill them all, but happily the moon waned, and, as the Mongols never make war between full moon and new moon, the Yakuts took advantage of this interval to travel as fast as possible to where they now live. The Yakuts in this part of the country are healthier, more energetic, and less oppressed than their brothers in the Far North-East, for the criminal settlers have not so much liberty. The Oulooss tries at first to get rid of the criminal by giving him butter, a sack of barley meal, and 10s. if he will go away and never return, and those who do return meet with a very unpleasant reception. Frequently there are terrible murders, the Yakuts throwing the criminals into ice-holes, which they can do without fear, for the criminals, being outlaws, have no rights."

7: Shklovsky -- 225 T-3 (1891-92) 1916 Yakut
116, 177, 563

"The Russian drivers in some villages have become almost entirely like the Yakuts among whom they live. They have narrow, slanting eyes, broad cheekbones, and hairless faces; and of Russian they know only a few words.

But ask your driver if he is a Yakut.

'No , I am Russian,' he will reply, with offended dignity.

The children of these settlers do not differ in any way from Yakuts."

7: Shklovsky -- 227 T-3 (1891-92) 1916 Yakut
116, 773, 776, 823

"Apparently the Evil Spirit of Yakutian legend, when he quarrelled with the Great White Spirit, spat out more masses of earth on the right bank of the Lena than on the left. According to this legend the earth was originally covered with water, The Evil Spirit and the Great White Spirit disputed as to which was the more poweful.

'What can you do?' asked the Great White Spirit.

'I can dive into the water and bring up a piece of clay,' replied the Evil Spirit. And he did so, and brought up the clay in his mouth.

The White Spirit took it and of it made the earth, but it was quite flat. However, the Evil Spirit had not given up all the clay he had brought, but had kept some in his mouth. The White Spirit, noticing this, struck the Evil Spirit on the back of the neck, causing him to spit out the clay, and wherever it fell mountains appeared."

7: Shklovsky --246-248 T-3 (1891-92) 1916 Yakut-1-2
116, 756, 776, 779

"Up to the begining of the eighteenth century the Bouriats, like all the Turko-Mongolian race, had the Horro religion, known to us as 'Shamanism.' This religion is also professed by Ostiaks, Samoyedes Yuraks, Yakuts, Lamouts and Toungouse.

In the time of the dynasty of Di-tyn, Shamanisn [247] was introduced into China under the name of Tyau-Shen, but, though it had no success there, it is important to mention the fact, because in 1747 there were published in the Manchurian language the regulations of the rites and ceremonies of Shamanisn, the only printed catechism of the old Mongol religion. There is also in existence an English translation of this catechism. I shall try to give briefly the substance of this religion.

The world is ruled by a passionless god, 'The drowsy Spirit of the Eight-sided Universe'; he has neither shape nor form; he is neither life nor death. I could not get even from the most learned Shaman a more definite statement of this belief. Involuntarily the thought comes into one's mind that this is probably a vague, shadowy idea of Brahma, the dark mind of the savage being unable to form a clearer conception of an abstract idea. The world is ruled by the 'Bald Father' (in Bouriat terminology), who cannot be angered, and who cannot be entreated , as his decisions are unchangeable. Therfore, it is absolutely useless to offer prayers and sacrifices. This god is deeply interested in all that concerns man; he is stern, or, more accurately speaking, powerful, for the Mongolian mind cannot imagine attributes such as goodness and mercy, but only omnipotence and

impotence, The Yakut name 'Almighty' quite shows this idea.

Arsin Dolai (the chief of the seven Oulooss of the wicked spirits, Abaghi) sends all evils and illness upon mankind, and the essence of the Horro religion is how to discover the means of propitiating this terrible god who afflict men so grievously, not in [248] revenge for their misdoings, but in the plenitude of his power."

7: Shklovsky -- 248 T-4 (1891-92)1916 Yakut
116, 756, 775

"The ideas of life and death are original. Each man has allotted to him two shadows, and liars have three. After a man's death these shadows return to the Abaghi, and are given the duty of guarding the guilty Abaghi whom Arsin Dolai consigns to the 'iron barn'; but the spirit of the dead man becomes a Yer, or wandering spirit, invisible except to the Shaman. In the 'central place' (the earth) there are a multitude of these Yer, and in the words of Milton:--

Millions of spiritual creatures walk the earth,
Unseen, both when we wake, and when we sleep.

These Yer are the active helpers of the evil spirits, for they can enter the bodies of people on earth, and so afflict them with all kinds of diseases: rheumatism, gastric and nervous diseases, etc. Besides Yer there are in the universe many wicked--that is to say, 'powerful'--gods, whose greatest pleasure it is to torment men, maim their animals, tear the nets of the fishers, etc. None can implore the god save those who from their birth are set apart by the good spirits, the Shamans, male and female."

7: Shklovsky --248-249 T-3 (1891-92) 1916 Yakut
116, 756, 776

"In one of the stories of the Bouriats the Shamans say: 'We know what others do not, for all that is hidden we discover.' Although amongst the Shamans one occasionally finds a conscious deceiver, the majority of them firmly believe in their power and knowledge, and they will only take very small fees for their services. The spirits are not pleased with the power which the Shamans have over them and they try to revenge themselves in every possible way. [249] 'Our gods are always angry with us, and we suffer greatly because of this, but we cannot cease, we must Shaman,' so said one of them. Each Shaman has the power of taking the form of an animal, and so can go about the world. This beast-form is given to him by his spirit protector, who guides him in this form round the universe during the performance of the 'mystery'. I have already described this ceremony. Like a ray of light in the dark outlook of Shamanism upon hostile nature shines the only beneficent spirit, the woman goddess, who acts disinterestedly for the benefit of all mankind. The Yakuts give her the title 'Mother Protector and Teacher and kind sympathetic Mother Creator.'"

7: Shklovsky -- 249-250 T-3 (1891-92) 1916 Yakut
116, 161

"The Yakuts and Bouriats are the only Siberian [250] natives who are not dying out, but, on the contrary, are rapidly increasing in number."